FOR THE FRENCH LILIES

By ISABEL NIXON WHITELEY, Author of "The Falcon

COMPLETE.



PPINCOT

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RECOLLECTIONS OF LINCOLN.

NO man in England felt a keener interest in the American question than did Richard Cobden. He made no secret of his sympathy with the Union. He had been in constant correspondence with Mr. Lincoln, and felt for the many-sided American patriot the deepest affection. Both were engaged in a national and far-reaching struggle, and defeat in America meant another century of Tory domination in Great Britain.

By a sea-coal fire, late in a November night, Mr. Cobden gave me his opinion of Abraham Lincoln. "This century has produced no man like Lincoln. Here is a man who has risen from manual labor to the presidency of a great people. To me he seems to be the man God has raised up to give courage and enthusiasm to a people unused to the arts of war, fighting what seems to me to be a doubtful battle in the greatest conflict of modern times.

"I like Mr. Lincoln's intense veneration for what is true and good.

His conscience and his heart are ruled by his reason.

"I speak of your struggle as doubtful, because Mr. Lincoln will have more to contend against in the hostility of foreign powers than in the shattered and scattered resources of the Confederacy."

Mr. Cobden predicted the triumph of our arms, but he died before

he had more than a Pisgah view of the promised land.

A delegation from Nevada called at the White House with written charges against Edward D. Baker (senator from Oregon, soon after killed at Ball's Bluff), and protesting against his influence with the President regarding official patronage on the Pacific slope. Together, in Sangamon County, had Baker and Lincoln toiled through the sparsely-settled country, through doubt and danger and hunger and cold, until both became eminent lawyers in the early history of Illinois. The President, with unusual sternness in his face, read the protest against the senator. There were a dozen prominent men from the West who felt sure they had spiked Baker's guns. Mr. Lincoln rose to his full height, tore the protest to shreds, cast the fragments in the fire, and bowed the visitors out of the east room of the White House. He said: "Gentlemen, I know Senator Baker. We were boys together in Illinois, and I believe in him. You have taken the wrong course to make yourselves influential with this administration at Senator Baker's expense."

The story of Lincoln's stubborn devotion to his old friend and companion in arms spread over Washington like wildfire; and neither before nor after that day did anybody ever try to climb into high place with Lincoln by pulling somebody else down. In four years' close

acquaintance, I never heard him speak ill of man or woman.

It was apropos of this incident that Mr. Lincoln said to Henry Wilson, of Massachusetts, "If ever this free people—if ever this government itself—shall become demoralized, it will come from this human

wriggle and struggle for office, for some way to live without work." He added, with charming näiveté, "from which I am not free myself."

To an applicant eager for office he said: "There are no emoluments which properly belong to patriotism. I brought nothing with me to

the White House, nor am I likely to carry anything away."

Two weeks before Chase left the cabinet, he asked Lincoln to sign the commission of a candidate for collector of the port at Buffalo. Lincoln did so without a word. I remonstrated with him for putting his rival's friend into power in a place where he could injure him in the approaching Baltimore Convention. With a twinkle in his eye and a smile that had no taint of malice in it, he looked down on me

and said, "I reckon we are strong enough to stand it."

It has been contended that our Union victories nominated and elected Abraham Lincoln for his second term. This statement is not supported by the history of that period. Hannibal Hamlin wrote thus in 1890: "In my judgment, the nomination of President Lincoln was not solely due to the victories of our armies in the field. Our people had absolute faith in his unquestioned honesty and in his great ability, the purity of his life, and in his administration as a whole. That was what led to his renomination; they were the great primary causes that produced the result, stimulated undoubtedly by our victories in the field."

Thaddeus Stevens wrote as follows in July, 1866: "You ask me about Lincoln's renomination. It came about in the most natural manner. There will be no more men like Abraham Lincoln in this century. There was no reason why he should be 'swapped' in crossing the stream. I approved of General Cameron's memorial of the Pennsylvania Legislature to the people, urging a second term for Lincoln."

That the President was alarmed at the threatened revolt in the Republican party there can be no doubt, but he never swerved in his course. He was in the habit of saying, "The way to get an office is to deserve it, and if I do not deserve a re-election I will not mourn at the

prospect of laying down these burdens."

When differences in the cabinet became dangerous enough to threaten its dissolution, he ceased to call his constitutional advisers together, and for over a year they had no formal cabinet session. Twenty United States senators called upon him in a body, intent on complaining of Stanton's conduct of the war. The President's sense of humor did not desert him, and he told a story about Blondin crossing Niagara.

"Would you," said he, "when certain death waited on a single false step, would you cry out, 'Blondin, stoop a little more! Go a little faster! Slow up! Lean more to the north! Lean a little more

to the south!' No; you would keep your mouths shut.

"Now, we are doing the best we can. We are pegging away at the rebels. We have as big a job on hand as was ever intrusted to mortal hands to manage. The government is carrying an immense weight; so, don't badger it. Keep silent, and we will get you safe across."

No delegation of senators ever again attempted to dictate to

Abraham Lincoln the manner in which our end of the civil war should be conducted.

One of Mr. Lincoln's characteristics was tenderness towards others. He wrote injuries in the sand, benefits on marble. The broad mantle of his enduring charity covered a multitude of sins in a soldier. He loved justice with undying affection, and he hated every desertion from the great army of humanity. He stopped the conveyance which carried Orville H. Browning and himself to court in Illinois to save a wounded hare hiding in a fence-corner. When his command, in the Black Hawk War, insisted on killing an old and friendless Indian prisoner, Lincoln saved the Indian's life at the peril of his own; and when his men complained that Lincoln was bigger and stronger than they were, he expressed his readiness to fight a duel with pistols with the leader of the malcontents, and thus ended the cruel controversy.

He was always equal to the occasion, whether it was to save a sleeping sentinel by one stroke of the pen from a dishonored death, or to write that bold and steady signature to the Proclamation of Emancipation.

He could say sharp things on occasion. He released some prisoners on the other side of the "Divide" in 1863. The wife of one of them insisted that her husband was a religious man, even if he was a rebel.

Mr. Lincoln wrote the release slowly, as if in doubt, and, without

smiling, handed it to the wife, saying,—

"In my opinion, the religion which sets men to rebel and fight against their government because they think it does not sufficiently help some men to eat their bread in the sweat of other men's brows is

not the sort of religion upon which people can get to heaven."

He said to a Congressman, when he had been importuned to join a church, "When any church will inscribe over its altar as its sole qualification the Saviour's condensed statement of the substance of the law and the gospel, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and thy neighbor as thyself,' that church will I join with all my heart."

Dick Gower had shown his bravery and his capacity among the Western Indians, but was rejected by the board of military martinets at Washington because he did not know what an abatis, or echelon,

or hollow square was.

"Well," sharply said the *dilettante* officer who wore a single eyeglass, "what would you do with your command if the cavalry should charge on you?"

"I'd give them Jesse; that's what I'd do. I'd make a hollow

square in every mother's son of them."

Lincoln signed his commission, and Dick made a famous soldier. General Frank P. Blair, who was very close to the President while the war lasted, told Richard Vaux this story:

"Mr. Lincoln had become impatient at McClellan's delay on the Peninsula, and asked Frank Blair to go with him to see the commanding general. The country was a volcano, smoking and ready for eruption.

"The distinguished visitors arrived on a hot day, and went at once to McClellan's head-quarters. They were received with scant courtesy.

Lincoln sat silent and uncomfortable, with his long and sinewy limbs doubled up like a jack-knife, until the general broke the silence by saying, 'Mr. President, have you received the letter I mailed you yesterday?'

"'No,' Lincoln replied; 'I must have passed it on the way.'

"McClellan then requested the chief of staff to find a copy of the letter. It was speedily produced, and the general read his vituperative attack on Stanton, with reflections on the conduct of the war. Lincoln's peaceful smile vanished. When the letter was ended he rose quickly and went out, looking neither to right nor left, and not waiting for any farewell. He seemed oppressed with a consciousness of the dangers of the military as well as the political situation. He drove slowly with General Blair over to the boat which was to convey them from Harrison's Landing back to Washington. When the vessel had started Lincoln, for the first time since leaving McClellan's tent, broke the silence and said,—

"'Frank, I understand the man now. That letter is McClellan's bid for the Presidency. I will stop that game. Now is the time to

issue the proclamation emancipating the slaves.'

"He forthwith issued the Emancipation Proclamation.

"Within a week after the world was startled by the new charter of freedom for the slave, Mr. Lincoln said to me in the White House:

"'I told you, a year ago, that Henry Ward Beecher and Horace Greeley gave me no rest because I would not free the negro. The time had not come. I read what you said in the Senate, and you struck the right chord when you said that the President argued the case like a Western lawyer; that he did not intend that this document should be regarded as the pope's bull against the comet, as the doubting Thomases said it would be; that he waited the fulness of time, and when the life of the nation hung trembling in the balance launched the proclamation. You were right,' he continued, with a smile. 'I was tired that day. But you will see no trace of doubt or hesitation in my signature to my greatest and most enduring contribution to the history of the war.'"

In the Congressional delegation from a Western State were two members who were intensely jealous of each other. Mr. Lincoln told the following story to a mutual friend of both, describing their different gifts. Jones, a class-leader in Sangamon County, was exceptionally gifted in prayer. Simpkins, Jones's neighbor, was a farmer who could not boast of a similar gift, but was known all over the county for his skill as a fiddler, which made him a welcome guest at every country "hoe-down." Simpkins never concealed his jealousy of Jones's power when he appealed to the throne of grace. After a remarkably effective display of Jones's vigor as a praying man, as Simpkins walked down the aisle of the little frame church, he turned towards Lincoln and said, "Lincoln, I know very well that I can't make half as good a prayer as old Jones; but, by the grace of God, I can fiddle the shirt off of him."

He said to a Congressional committee: "Here I am, surrounded by

many men more eager to make money out of the nation's distress than to put a shoulder to the wheel and lift the government hub out of the mire. Do you wonder I get depressed when I stand here and feel how hard it is to die, unless I can make the world understand that I would be willing to die if I could be sure I am doing my work towards lift-

ing the burdens from all mankind."

He said to General Campbell; "I am as happy as if our armies had won a victory against the rebels. Mr. Stevens brought one of his constituents to me yesterday, a lady seventy-five years of age, whose son, only nineteen years old, was sentenced to be shot to-morrow at noon for sleeping at his post. I took till to-day to examine into the case. I cannot consent that a farmer lad, brought up to keep early hours in going to bed and rising, shall be shot to death for being found asleep when he ought to have been awake. I pardoned the boy, and I sent a messenger early this morning with the welcome news to the boy's regiment. The mother, like Niobe, all tears, has just left me, and as she went out my heart came up in my throat when, between her tears, she went up to old Thad. Stevens, who had helped her to save her son's life, and said, between her sobs, 'You told me Linkum was ugly. How could you say so, Mr. Stevens? for I think he has one of the most beautiful faces I ever saw!" Then the President laughed his sweet, soft laugh, as merry as a boy; but there were tears in his eyes.

No more touching incident in Lincoln's life has ever appeared than that contained in a story told by General William T. Sherman. It came directly from William H. Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State. It was the habit of that gracious optimist, Mr. Seward, to spend his Sunday mornings with the President. After the President had been shaved in his own room, he accompanied his Secretary of State across Pennsylvania Avenue and over to the Seward mansion, afterwards

occupied by Secretary Blaine.

On one of these Sundays a tall, military figure was pacing up and down in front of Secretary Seward's house. He saluted the President in military fashion as the two statesmen passed him. There was something in the officer's expression that arrested Mr. Lincoln's attention. The soldier was a lieutenant-colonel in a Pennsylvania regiment. Emotional himself, the President was swift to detect unusual emotion in others. He said, "You seem to be in a peck of troubles?"

"Yes," said the lieutenant-colonel, "I am in deep trouble. My wife is dying at our home in Pennsylvania, and my application for a furlough for two weeks was peremptorily refused yesterday by my colonel. My God! what can I do? If I go home my colonel will

brand me as a deserter, and I will be arrested on my return."

Mr. Lincoln was visibly affected. "Never mind, young man," said

he. "We'll try and fix this matter."

He pulled a card from his vest pocket, and, leaning against the broad oaken doors of the Seward mansion, he wrote on its back,—

"EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War: It is my desire that Lieutenant-Colonel —— be granted fifteen days' leave of absence.
"A. LINCOLN."

When he was a candidate for renomination he did not disguise his anxiety to remain in the White House for four years more, to finish, as he expressed it, the great job the people had given him to do.

It was not Fremont he feared, or the Wade-Davis Manifesto, nor was he afraid of the numerous and powerful malcontents inside his own party, headed by Chase and Greeley. But he did fear, as he told me, that General Grant's name would be sprung upon the Baltimore Convention. Indeed, such an effort was made, and Missouri did cast her solid vote for Grant for President, but Grant wisely and stubbornly refused to countenance this movement, and by telegraph forbade it. The President learned that one of Grant's staff was at Willard's Hotel. He sent his carriage. The officer was brought to the White House and ushered into the library. Lincoln said, "Colonel ——, does Grant want to be President?"

"No, sir," quickly replied the staff officer.

"Do you know for certain?"

"Yes, I do. You know how close I have been to Grant for three years. That he has the last infirmity of noble minds, ambition, I cannot deny. There may be lurking in his mind thoughts of the Presidency in the dim future. But right well I know, Mr. Lincoln, that he is so loyal to you, to whom he owes so much, that there is no power on earth that can drag his name into this Presidential canvass. McClellan's career was a lesson to him. He said to me, within a week, 'I regard Abraham Lincoln as one of this world's greatest men, and he is without question the greatest man I ever met.' Grant's whole soul, Mr. Lincoln, is bent on your reëlection, and his one fixed idea is, under your lead as President, to conquer the rebellion, and aid you in restoring and rebuilding the country and perpetuating the Union."

"Ah, colonel," said Lincoln, "you have lifted an awful load from my mind. I was afraid of Grant, because we are all human; although I would rather be beaten by him than by any living man. When the Presidential grub gets inside of a man it hides itself and burrows deep.

That basilisk is sure to kill."

James M. Scovel.

WILL POETRY DISAPPEAR?

THE question is not whether the poetry of the world now existing in printed volumes will—like the Gospel of Bartholomew, for example—wholly disappear. Books are so widely distributed that the total destruction of the work of any author of note is not to be expected, however desirable such a result might be in many cases, and however deep the dust of neglect which hereafter shall settle upon his forgotten pages. Our great libraries, enormously enlarged, will remain, vast and sombre catacombs, to tempt the wandering philologists and Old Mortalities of the future. The question more accurately is, will poetry survive as a mode of thought, an organic part of the civilization and intellectual life of the future, or only as the bones of the